MF, HR, JW, RB

Dear Sylvia,

11/8/72

Do not fear to fear there. There will be no recrimination. I do not write for any such purpose. Rather the opposite. Several things have combined to give me concern about you. Some may be irrelevant, but I do not know.

In the span of a few days I received a number of things by mail, some delayed innocently. Yesterday's, on my mind on starting the day, is what impels me to write.

I have been concerned at having heard nothing about your health. I was sufficiently concerned when you gave me the slight indication you did to get and read a book on the general subject, one of which I'd known nothing. Perhaps it gave me some understanding. I dox hope you have been able to emerge from it by now. Initially I suppose it was have been rather difficult.

People who live with as many different kinds of seemingly endless problems as we do may be so immersed in their own that they may be insensitive to those of others. More so if we have had only a glimmer of those others have. However, once there is awareness, I suppose there is or can be more compassion.

In yesterday's mail there was a clipping of Cyril's interview in the National Enquirer from a Chicago writer friend. The night before Ed Williams had called me in some frustration after having read it. A day or two earlier I got from Howard the response Dick had sent Jerry a month ago to Jerry's apparently round-robin letter of about that time to me. I also got from Howard a memo he had written about the appearance at Penn of Fensterwald and Sprague. (The last two are a minterature of our corrupt society, going around like whore proclaiming their own purity and being so accepted, as they themselves believe to be the case- really sick - literally.)

Initially nobody agreed with me. Dick never changed his mind until afterward, when Cyril did it for him. Dick and I have hardly been in touch since he moved into his new home. That added to his work kept him rather busy.

A little before that I was sent Joesten's last two. One of them contained a letter he did not attribute. I felt - perhaps I should say feared - it was yours.

Dick's advice to Jerry, a paraphrase of my own, was that he should begin as I had begun by asking all, to think. Dick is not aware of the long process of self-deception through which Jerry has gone but I am for I know what transpired between us and Jerry has lied about it. Whether or not deliberately is immaterial. (Actually, I do not think itwas deliberate. I have labelled it what I believe it to be, self-deception.) Dick then told Jerry much more simply than I had, that he should learn from the experience. I think that is the essence for those who may have suffered and then perhaps sublimated a trauma in all of this.

You have not reflected your own feelings, which was a small surprise to me. I do not now solicit them or response. As you will see from the few enclosures, I have been uncertain about writing you, not anxious to. I have no reluctance in telling you my own, as best I can recall them through the pressing things that would have kept them from the forefront of my awareness. I have given this little thought also because I didn8t want to, spilt milk being for cats. I think there were but two surprises to me:Cyril's unprofessionalism (and I think I mentioned this earlier), and the vigor of the assault on the Kennedys by their trusted. I didn't expect as much of what others seem not to have detected or so identified, Marshall's victimizing of his client. I don't think you are on a position to evaluate this or the statements of seeming fact by officialdom. Unless your views have changed, I presume you do not find this unwelcome. However, I also believe that if it has not yet, in time this will come to gnaw at you as understanding also comes, and I would not have that new trouble added.

I had certain advantages, aside from earlier experiences, over the rest of you. Most important of these was my own relations with Cyril, the changes that took place in time quite unilaterally and not easily misinterpreted, and my own dealings with the government, more extensive, I would imagine, than that of all others combined. Especially ith the Archives (at the top and above it) and Justice.

In part my purpose is, in the phrase of the young, to help you put your head together on this, for there may yet be more of what to me will be evil. I can only hope that the feds are as stupid as they sometimes have been because Cyril intends further disasters to truth.

If the letter to Joesten was yours, I think you should ask yourself if the opening praise in what he quoted is any less relevant if applied to Garrison? Was he not also persistent, does he not, rabidly more than stupidly, persist today? Persistence is not cause for praise when applied to the vomit of the Joestens. He, the Spragues, the Buds and

their too-numerous companions have combined to destroy the credibility of us all. As you may remember, as far back as early 1969 I refused to engage in what I regard and then regarded as effort at minor attention.

If this letter is yours, you are right to retire. My regret is that you did not do it sooner because you would then have higher regard for the fine work you have done. Your situation has long made it impossible for you to continue with it as I know you have longed to.

There is other introspection I would recommend to you. I suggest you contrast your position on the theft, as I regard it, of my work, and the tight security in whch you held what you described as a truly sensational thing Lifton had developed. It is right that one be published by others and not the second? Was it not the same with Forman? So, in order that these things not trouble you later, I hope you will think them through now if you have not already.

Nor would I have you live with and fool yourself with other illusions. Believing the Graham reporting to be fully truthful would be one. It is not as it does not relate to Cyril, regardless of the directness of the quotation. That gets into areas in which I think I do not exaggerate in telling you I think I spent more time than you did in the writing of your book. Part-truths may be bigger lies than unalloyed lies.

I will not take the time of either of us to expand on this and given the history of the recent past, I will not change on this, not that I think you'll want me to. But if you do, don't. It will not be good for you and I just won't do it.

This is also the area in which Ned had his major concern and an enormous trauma when I faced him down on it, extending into the later part of the early morning. His strange reaction then was, in his own words, "I have never been so put down in my life!" What an odd way of finally admitting that a belief was without factual foundation. So, he dedicated himself to fabricating reality of the fiction dear to him.

When what followed this did follow, Infound myself wondering why. I never did anything about it until suddenly, as I now remember, just about out of the clear, an idea popped into my head, and I did some rudimentary checking. You can do the simplest for yourself by consulting the index to the Ross-Wise The Espionage Establishment for African American Institute and Katzenbach. Ned told me he was on its board with Katzenbach. It is a CIA foundation and Katzenbach a CIA defender (at least). Please take this not as an accusation but as reporting. I have not been able to and do not intend to follow this further. But I find it as remarkable a coincidence as I do the crossing of my trail in 1965 by E. Howard Hunt, who I have just recently learned from his bio was, while with CIA as an illegal domestic spy also at the literary agency to which I was referred when the Saturday Evening Post had decided favorably on WHITEWASH. The agency with which he then was killed thedeal. The reason alleged was soon enough proven fraudulent. (Hunt remained with it through the entire period of assassination activity, until after the Shaw trial, his leaving being a other coincidence, perhaps?)

Cyril has demanded access to the brain and the tissue sample from the rear, non-fatal wound. Do you suppose these will tell him other than that shots came from the back? It is not merely the question, what good will this do us that you should ask yourself. Ask also what good it will do others, for others alone it can help. Not truth. Assuming he is given the genuine stuff. I think that what I have done for other purposes and going much farthur back than Cyril's request for access makes this impossible, but if they are shrewd enough to risk a lawsuit from me they would then lose, they can get an enormous victory for deceipt and treachery by granting his request. I would hope you find it enough that as recently as in the current thing he continues to proclaim Oswald's guilt.

For your information, not a single one of the few reporters who spoke to me of Cyril's statements has disagreed. All say the sole accomplishment was the shafting (the word of the one who quoted me) of the Kennedys. So, we have this major accomplishment: making it more improbable that any of those who might have helped us now will. The Kennedys are shafted, the Hoovers are the annointed, the FBI is pure and the government becomes honorable.

My quoted comment is that the guilty were exculpated and truth was further buried. I did not attack Cyril.

I guess Santayana put what I havein mind as well as anyone I can recall. Those who do not learn from the past are doomed to relive it. I hope you will spare yourself this. I hope you will think this all through, sorting it out correctly, separating passion and reality, and come to understand that whether or not in restrospect you can tell yourself that you would with the insight you might get do and want the same things were the same chaices again to confront you, what you did is only human, as we all are. Best regards,